Malcolm Cowley on Edmund Wilson

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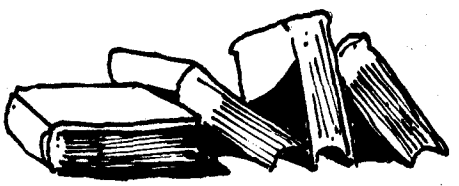

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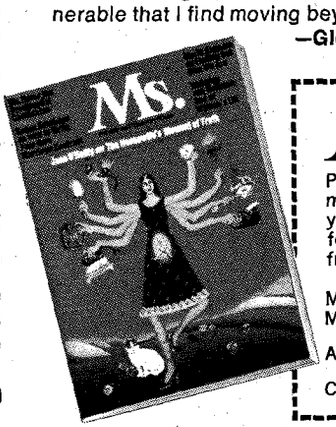

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TRB

from Washington ®

July 1, 1972

The Candor Issue

There's an "X" factor in this election; how deep does alienation run, how far can McGovern articulate it? I watched McGovern testify here last week. The GOP wavers between thinking him a nut and having twinges of apprehension. Is it possible, just possible, the White House asks, that the public is taking him *seriously?* McGovern is unassuming and unglamorous. He is balding. The staggering thought as you watch him is that this decent man really intends to try to do something about unfair taxes, excessive defense costs, and overextension abroad.

You look at him and say, golly, the guy must have been type-cast to play McGovern. What I mean is that the late Everett Dirksen created the lovely role of "Everett Dirksen" and enjoyed performing it immensely and used to wink at you (a reporter) in the midst of one of his finest flights. But McGovern is just himself. The committee sharply questions him. What comes almost as a surprise is a certain formidableness. He fuzzes the ground somewhat on specific details but he is dogged on general direction. Can somebody get nominated, you ask yourself, who says "ve-hick-el" and "cow-ar-dyce?"

It was good theater to be standing there at an intermission when a reporter rushed in with a bulletin on the spiteful charge of the Manchester (NH) *Union Leader* that McGovern had a smirch on his war record as a bomber pilot. He could have thumped his chest and struck a heroic pose; what a set-up, with all the reporters yelling questions or holding up mikes! McGovern was irritated but he didn't register noble injury. He said he thought the charge was pretty silly, that the air force had his record. He got to talking about his 35 missions; on one of them he flew over target with one engine out, he recalled, lost another coming home, and crash-landed. He noted that by tradition the final mission is made easy for veteran fliers, but McGovern's group rejected this leniency. "I put it up to the crew," he said mildly; "they voted to take the usual assignment." He added with a grin, "A lot of times I was scared. But that's not the same thing as cow-ar-dyce."

Republicans, I think, underestimate McGovern. Because a man is homespun he isn't necessarily a nut. Personally, I don't think his present tax and welfare proposals add up; they are currently in process of refinement and I'll wait for the revised version. But there is no question of his object or his determination. He opposed Vietnam when he was almost alone. He believes America's danger is at home; not abroad. He wants to give the poor a fair shake. And if he isn't nominated after New York we think the nomination isn't worth much.

Against McGovern's simplicity Washington takes on a murky Alice in Wonderland quality as police arrest five men with GOP connections set to bug Democratic headquarters. An embarrassed John Mitchell denies any connection with the affair though a couple of the arrested men turn out to have contracts to provide security service to his Reelect the President organization.

You have to measure the prairie simplicity of McGovern against this kind of stuff. It is a new credibility gap; a new kind; it is different from that of Lyndon Johnson which was personal; this seems to pervade the whole upper echelon of the GOP team. Can we really believe there wasn't something fishy in the relation of the GOP and the ITT, and the shredding of all Dita Beard's papers? How about the $10 million which corporate fat cats contributed at the last minute to the Nixon campaign, just before the deadline for the new federal public disclosure law. "We have no moral obligation to disclose where the money came from," says Mitchell.

Extraneous things fit the pattern. Take the admission of Gen. Lavelle that he ordered at least 28 unauthorized raids into North Vietnam, and lied about them as having been for "protective reaction" (*i.e.*, defensive). He did it just about the time that Mr. Nixon was denouncing Hanoi for violating "understandings" and for being an "outlaw" that couldn't be trusted. Does Mr. Nixon really know what his generals are doing?

Reporters used to put matters like this up to Presidents at regular press conferences. If Rogers disputes Laird, where can you go but to Mr. Nixon? But Mr. Nixon has all but ended the press conference. White House adviser Ehrlichman, in Los Angeles, explained that the President is tired of hearing all those "flabby" and "dumb" questions. It would be nice to ask a question or two about the crew trying to bug Democratic headquarters, even a flabby one.

A year ago TRB wrote a piece questioning Mitchell's judgment. We said he was responsible for his boss's humiliation in the Haynsworth-Carswell rejections, and for abetting the President in his bitter tirade against the Senate on the presidential yacht *Sequoia* when he "reluctantly concluded" that he couldn't get a southerner confirmed to the Supreme Court with the Senate "as then constituted." Mitchell stood right beside him. Mitchell backed the southern strategy. He botched the 1970 midterm election, too, by encouraging the hysterical attack against students and demonstrators. Mitchell ran the 1968 sure-thing campaign against the wounded Humphrey and won; but the thing we remember is that Mr. Nixon started out with a 16 percent lead after Chicago, and ended up with less than one percent, and with no mandate, and with a Democratic Congress.

So often it is Mitchell's long shadow! For example, he is hipped on wiretapping. He argued that the FBI could tap wires of domestic subversive suspects without bothering to get a warrant (because the President has an "inherent right" to do this and can transmit it through the attorney general). Mitchell is no constitutional lawyer; he was the municipal bond authority in the Nixon New York law firm. "Never in our history," he declared a year ago, has America been so threatened with "revolutionary elements" needing the curb of wiretapping. He got Mr. Nixon to go along with him and defend the Mitchell thesis (San Clemente, May 1, 1971) against "hysteria" and "political demagoguery." Well, Mr. Nixon's Supreme Court last week unanimously slapped down the Mitchell-Nixon thesis.

Mr. Nixon is loyal to John. The Supreme Court's rebuff and the curious effort to bug the Democrats by somebody or other won't destroy this beautiful relationship. Both are self-made, private men. John is stony-faced and absolutely self-assured. Something in Mr. Nixon needs him.

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Contents

3 Comment
Having It Both Ways, New York in June, Weak Link, Score One for Daley, Political Intrigue
10 Who If Not George?—*Paul R. Wieck*
12 Connally Watching—*Robert B. Semple, Jr.*
15 The Democrats on the Eve—*James MacGregor Burns*
20 Films—*Stanley Kauffmann*
21 Television—*Sedulus*
22 Books—Review by *Saul Maloff*
22 Poem—*Richard Eberhart*
25 A Reminiscence: Edmund Wilson on *The New Republic*—*Malcolm Cowley*

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Having It Both Ways

President Nixon told Congress on his return from Moscow that the strategic arms limitation agreements just concluded were "the first step toward a new era of mutual agreed restraint and arms limitation between the two principal nuclear powers. With this step we have enhanced the security of both nations. We have begun to check the wasteful and dangerous spiral of nuclear arms which has dominated relationships between our two countries for a generation." Those are hopeful words and from them one might gather that at last the nuclear powers were turning away from efforts to build ever larger and more sophisticated stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The ABM treaty, the interim agreement on offensive weapons, the detailed written interpretations, and the briefings of Henry Kissinger and Ambassador Gerard Smith, who negotiated the SALT agreements, all support the conclusion that the agreements *can be* a major step toward curbing the futile arms race. Although the ABM treaty allows both nations to enlarge unnecessarily their current missile defenses, it nevertheless prevents the unlimited deployment of ABMs, which could erode the current posture of mutual deterrence. The negotiators succeeded in closing many loopholes which might have provided excuses for continuing defensive weapons programs.

The much less important interim agreement on *offensive* weapons is, however, another story. It limits only numbers of missiles and puts virtually no restrictions on qualitative improvements. Senator Jackson and others have expressed fears that the agreement endangers US security, though it is hard to understand why, since it has absolutely no effect on any current or planned US weapons program. Moreover, it does place some ceilings on numbers of Soviet missiles, particularly the large ICBMs, which have been the source of major concern to Jackson and Secretary Laird. Although the agreement probably does not stop any program that the Soviets had any strong desire to carry forward, its potential should not be discounted since US weapons procurement has always been based on the possibility that the Soviets would not stop until they had an overwhelming numerical lead.

We have suggested before that the test of the Moscow talks is whether both countries now show restraint. As the Senate hearings on the agreements begin, the real debate is not on whether the accords

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should be ratified, but on whether the US should now simultaneously proceed with accelerated strategic weapons programs or exercise restraint appropriate to the new security situation resulting from the agreement in Moscow. Unfortunately the administration is headed in the direction of massive expenditures for offensive weapons. Secretary Laird repeated before the Armed Services Committee June 20 that as far as he was concerned the SALT accords were contingent on congressional approval of the $83 billion defense budget, including approval of the supersonic B-1 bomber [*NR*, June 17] and the Trident or ULMS long-range submarine. He'd not have one without the other.

President Nixon has made clear that he too subscribes to the view that the Moscow success calls for increased military spending though neither he nor Secretary Rogers has said flatly as Laird has said that if new weapons are not approved the SALT agreements should be abrogated by the US. Mr. Brezhnev, according to Nixon, had said that the Russians were going ahead with "programs in the offensive areas which are not limited by these agreements" and so should we. The President, moreover, believes in the bargaining chip theory according to which US failure "to go forward with its offensive programs would mean that any incentives that the Soviets had to negotiate a follow-on agreement would be removed." In other words we must buy more and more bargaining chips which are never cashed in. The Safeguard ABM succeeded in producing a treaty which allowed both sides to enlarge, not cut back, their ABM deployments; each can now have a national capital ABM and a missile site defense, although the Russians previously showed no interest in an ICBM defense and the US never succeeded in getting even the Armed Services Committees of Congress to authorize a Washington ABM. We sought funds for the ULMS-Trident follow-on submarine missile system in order to counter the Soviet submarine build-up; yet now that we have negotiated a ceiling on their program we must proceed with ULMS at an accelerated pace. It doesn't make sense.

The Pentagon has found an argument that seems to work with people predisposed to believe arms limitations have become a pretext for new military spending. At a recent White House briefing, Senator Stennis who was becoming skeptical of military requests based on exaggerated Soviet threats stated that he believes the ABM program helped win the SALT agreement and on that basis "I am going to support the new B-1 bomber and the ULMS submarine programs. I am going all the way on ULMS now, even though I had in mind supporting it only for a limited amount this year."

Sen. Fulbright, who supports the SALT agreements, is right to fear that Laird, the "genius at semantic confusion," wants to turn an arms limitation agreement into an "enormous escalation of the arms race."

New York in June

The McGovern sweep of New York's delegate primary (230 of 237 races he contested) illustrates once again that you can't beat somebody with nobody. Of New York's 278 votes, McGovern may end up with between 260 and 270 once the 30 at-large delegates are selected in proportion to the outcome of the primary.

The extent of McGovern's win should put to rest serious talk of stopping McGovern at Miami Beach; indeed, it should accelerate the movement of uncommitted delegates into his corner.

To help save his uncommitted slate in Erie County against the McGovern onslought, state chairman Joe Crangle brought in Muskie the Sunday before the primary. Crangle has a real organization, one that rings doorbells, polls voters, etc. He also has a heavily Polish-American constituency, not known for its liberalism on the new social issues. Muskie didn't do a bit of good; in fact, the voters of Erie County gave him the clearest hint he's had since he reactivated his campaign June 9 that he had best deactivate it once more and get on with helping to unify the party.

In the closing days of the New York primary, there was a good deal of alarm in the McGovern camp over the heavy Jewish vote, particularly that concentrated in some of the middle-class boroughs. Repeatedly, McGovern was accused of being uncaring about Israel, a devastating charge in New York City. It didn't take. McGovern slates won every district with a heavy or predominant Jewish vote.

What can be said of the House races? Regardless of the outcome of the Ryan-Abzug and Bingham-Scheuer races, the House stood to lose a good member. It lost Abzug and Scheuer. In Brooklyn, Emmanuel Celler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, was upset by a young woman, Elizabeth Holtzman, but Rep. John Rooney (D), the real target of the reformers, survived again by turning back ex-Rep. Allard Lowenstein.

Weak Link

General John D. Lavelle seemed mighty pleased with himself after he willfully disobeyed the President of the United States in ordering at least 28 unauthorized bombing raids on North Vietnam, raids later falsely characterized as protective reaction. Though Lavelle had recklessly endangered a national policy affecting 200 million of his fellow citizens, he said he would do the same thing again. When we recall how Harry Truman briskly handled a *five*-star general who disobeyed orders, the punishment meted out to Lavelle by the White House—loss of a star and early retirement—appears decidedly inadequate.

The military system is built on the chain of com-

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mand. The law governing the chain of command is simple and unyielding: every commander is responsible for the actions of his subordinate. This responsibility is not extenuated by a commander's lack of knowledge of his subordinate's violation of orders. The purpose of the chain of command is to ensure maximum discipline, maximum diligence, maximum supervision. And there can be no excuse for a commander's failure to properly supervise his subordinate, for to permit this would give rise to many Lavelles at all levels of the armed forces.

The Lavelle case is quite simple and clearcut. The official chain of command in the War Zone works this way: the 7th air force comes under the responsibility of the US Military Assistance Command-Vietnam (MACV), which is technically responsible to the Commander in Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC), who reports to the joint chiefs of staff of the armed forces, who report to the secretary of Defense, who directly serves the President, the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. Thus the Lavelle violation occurred on the fifth level of command removed from the President of the United States. Lavelle in turn corrupted the air force chain of command in Vietnam down to its lowest level—that of the airmen ordered to load bombs on airplanes carrying out the illegal raids on North Vietnam.

General Creighton Abrams is commander of the US Military Assistance Command-Vietnam. General John D. Lavelle was Abrams' immediate subordinate. There were no layers of command between Abrams and Lavelle. The question is whether the system is to maintain its integrity. The Commander in Chief should nominate General Abrams for immediate retirement. And most certainly not for the position of army chief of staff.

Score One for Daley

Mayor Richard J. Daley's efforts to frustrate the reform rules of the National Democratic Party—or at least ensure that they are not enforced on him—have finally met with some success. Daley initially was blocked by a federal judge in Illinois, who ruled that any court intervention against the challengers would be an infringement of their First Amendment rights of political association. Undaunted, the Mayor sent a battery of attorneys off to federal court in Washington, DC, to sue National Chairman Lawrence O'Brien, Acting Credentials Chairwoman Patricia Roberts Harris, and the entire National Democratic Party.

Here Daley ran into a more receptive federal judge—temporarily. George Hart, Jr., a former GOP chairman from the District of Columbia and himself a delegate to four Republican national conventions, declared the Democratic rules requiring reasonable representation of women, blacks, and young people to be unconstitutional "quotas." The case was appealed the next day and Judge Hart's order set aside, at least until the credentials committee acts. However, the order of the three-judge court in Washington seems to leave the door open for further court action if challenged delegates believe they have been unseated by imposition of a quota system.

The Credentials Committee is now set to hear nearly 60 challenges involving over 25 states. Of these, about 40 involve some element of the guidelines requiring more representation for women, youth and blacks.

Political Intrigue

Former White House consultant Howard E. Hunt, Jr., implicated in the bugging of the Democratic National Committee, is a retired CIA employee. He is also the author, under the alias David St. John, of such thrillers as *On Hazardous Duty* and *The Towers of Silence*. In the latter epic, the hero is placed in a funerary tower in Bombay. The slow-winged vultures circle closer to their victim, ready to rend flesh from bone. Nothing like that is likely to happen to Hunt in this latest incident. When asked about his role, why two of the detainees had his phone number, his reply to a reporter was: "Good God!" After a pause, he went on: "In view that the matter is under adjudication I have no comment." He's had no comment either for the FBI agents investigating the case. With both the White House and the Committee to Reelect Nixon apparently involved, Hunt may have no more serious problem than developing a new alias.

From events so far, it would appear that Charles Colson, Nixon's aide for dirty tricks, used Hunt as a consultant. And over at the Committee to Reelect the President, regular employee James W. McCord, also a retired CIA employee, was the alleged leader of the five-man team (the other four were Cuban freedom fighters, also with CIA connections) that conducted the surreptitious entry of the Democrats' Watergate Hotel suite, apparently to photograph documents and plant (or remove) audio surveillance devices. (John and Martha Mitchell are also among the Watergate's famous tenants.)

The White House, initially at least, tried to ignore the incident as "a third rate burglar attempt," which Ron Ziegler said was unworthy of further comment. The Democrats are suing the Republicans for invasion of privacy and taking it all very seriously, which they have every right to do.

With the apparatus of Justice in the hands of Richard Kleindienst, what kind of FBI investigation can one expect?

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There's No Stopping Him

Who If Not George?

"There is no stop-McGovern movement. It doesn't exist," Ann Wexler said between telephone calls to the more than 500 uncommitted delegates to the Democratic National Convention. Searching out McGovern votes in this category of delegates is her specialty, and three weeks before the convention she was hopeful her candidate would win on the first ballot.

True, she hears objections, the same ones over and over again. If nominated, McGovern will split the party and defeat other Democrats running in November. People wonder about all the talk of his "radical" programs. Once objections are exhausted, Ms. Wexler replies with a question: "What's the alternative?" The problem the stop-McGovern "movement" has with dozens of uncommitted delegates is that there isn't an alternative because McGovern is pitted against a cast of known losers, with one exception—the wounded George Wallace. "If you think his nomination will split the party, what do you think will happen if he's denied the nomination?" Wexler asks. The same uncommitted delegates worried about their legislative or state tickets or their senator or congressman are just as eager to enlist the support of McGovern's well-organized legions for their favorites. What happens if they leave Miami Beach crushed, defeated?

To succeed, a stop-McGovern movement must herd the supporters of Muskie, Humphrey, Jackson, Wallace, Chisholm, Sanford, Fauntroy and Mills plus most of the more than 500 uncommitted delegates under the same tent.

As of June 18, the McGovern camp was counting 1146 delegates (including eight projected from Delaware). Two days later, their candidate picked up another 260 or more from New York, including at-large delegates who will be apportioned according to the outcome of the district primaries. That brings them to 1406, ahead of their earlier predictions because of successes in several convention states in the last few weeks. They picked up 35 instead of 19 in Virginia, 34 instead of 30 in Texas, 14½ instead of 10 in Montana. There was a little slippage in a few states (24 instead of 25 in Colorado, 11 instead of 14 in Utah, 7½ instead of 10 in North Dakota) but, totaled up, it measures an overall gain rather than a loss of strength.

To back this up, their second-ballot strength is up over earlier calculations, all of the gain coming from states in which Wallace or Humphrey won primaries. Several weeks ago, *The New Republic* estimated 65 second-ballot votes from these states; today, the estimate is 86, based on delegates now actually selected from the four states involved—Maryland (14), North Carolina (21), Tennessee (24) and Indiana (27). Add the 86 to 1406 and you're at 1492 without dipping into the second-choice strength McGovern has among Chisholm, Muskie and Fauntroy delegates. Nor does it take into account the inroads Ms. Wexler is confident McGovern is making among uncommitted delegates from states such as Connecticut (possibly John Bailey's bloc), New Jersey, Kansas and, possibly, Oklahoma. The message to those with hopes of stopping McGovern is simple: everybody has to be kept inside the tent.

The big development in the stop-McGovern effort was Muskie's decision to reactivate his campaign the Friday after McGovern won California and three other state primaries. Muskie's move stunned a lot of people. It was widely reported he planned to pull out, endorse McGovern and sew up the nomination for him. Instead, he stayed in and set out on a cross-country delegate hunt. Results are mixed. In Montana, he was cheered at the state convention but the delegates then gave McGovern 14½ of 17 delegates. Muskie netted about 100 delegates out of the uncommitted column on his trip. He was really taking them away from Humphrey, who needed all 100 to build a sizable bloc on the first ballot. Muskie may do some more of that; in fact, the big fight could be between Muskie and Humphrey for the votes of uncommitted, anti-McGovern delegates.

The decision was apparently Muskie's own although there have been reports that both Clark Clifford and Sen. Harold Hughes (D, Iowa) influenced him in that direction. Both deny it. Publicly, Muskie has said he wants to apply pressure from the center on McGovern to moderate his views, a move which may well be welcomed by those McGovern supporters anxious to have the convention write the kind of platform McGovern can run on and the country can support. Tax reform will obviously be a big factor. But social issues such as legalized marijuana, abortion, legalizing homosexual marriages, etc., may better be left to the states. Amnesty, however, is a national issue and will have to be dealt with at Miami Beach. A requirement for alternate service should resolve some of the difficulty on this one.

A clear and important distinction should be drawn between Muskie's reactivated candidacy and the Humphrey onslaught against McGovern. The Humphrey strategy is to scare the party out of nominating McGovern by throwing around a lot of loose charges, a tactic first used by Jackson in the primaries. The Humphrey tactic probably cut McGovern's margin by five percent or more in California.

Muskie, in contrast, is not conducting that sort of campaign. In fact, his convention manager, Hughes, insists he won't allow such tactics. Nor are the people around Muskie hard-core anti-McGovernites. For instance, Clifford not only is not indulging in the scare tactics but says he will support McGovern if he's nominated—with a financial contribution and in any other way McGovern asks. Hughes argues that it's

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clear the Democratic Party stands for change and that the only argument is how much change and who would be the strongest candidate.

Muskie has had one negative effect on the McGovern campaign. At the time he reactivated his candidacy, it appeared as many as 60 or 70 Muskie delegates from states such as New Hampshire, Illinois, Iowa, Arizona and Idaho were ready to follow Muskie into the McGovern camp or make the switch on their own if Muskie remained passive. Some still may. But he's clearly slowed the movement to McGovern for the moment. Still, there's no reason to believe they'll stay put if a Humphrey or a Jackson banner is hoisted.

Aside from scare tactics, Humphrey's campaign is relying heavily on its challenge to California's "winner-take-all" primary to lift morale. If they could win that one, they'd shave over 100 delegates from McGovern's total and the nomination would no longer be within easy grasp. However, the McGovern rules explicitly exempt winner-take-all primaries, complicating the challenge (it's based on one-man, one-vote). Muskie has showed little interest.

Nor does the Humphrey effort have much in common with the Chisholm candidacy. In state after state, Chisholm delegates were elected with solid support from the McGovern camp, leading one to conclude they're partners in an effort to open the doors of the Democratic convention to wider participation by blacks, women and young people. Once the 30 or 40 Chisholm delegates have cast a vote for her, it's safe to guess two-thirds of them will go over to McGovern.

Humphrey will find allies in Jackson's contingent from Washington, among labor delegates under the thumb of George Meany (a healthy percentage of whom are already included in the 379½ votes the McGovern people credit to Humphrey), in uncommitted southern delegations or portions of delegations controlled by governors (West in South Carolina, Carter in Georgia, Edwards in Louisiana, Briscoe in Texas) unless they slip away to Muskie or Mills before the convention opens. He can also count on the handful of Ohio delegates pledged to Stokes and Hays. But this bloc falls hundreds of votes short of being enough to threaten McGovern, let alone stop him.

What remains? The Wallace delegates—something like 200 to 250 or more of the 374 committed to vote for him on the first ballot. It's hard to say what Wallace will do with them now that it appears he'll recover from his second operation in time to attend the convention. They will probably just sit tight and try to deadlock the convention. But, without Muskie's delegates, it's still not enough.

One question that seldom arises in all the stop-McGovern talk is whether or not he should be stopped. What will it mean to the party if he is? The party is already saddled with a $9 million debt, most of it incurred during Humphrey's primary and general election campaigns in 1968. In the four years that have elapsed, the party under Humphrey's managers hasn't been able to pay it off although special fund-raising activities are scheduled in connection with the convention. As a candidate in 1972, Humphrey is again piling up debts. Certainly, there's nothing about the 1972 Humphrey campaign that leads one to believe he'd be a better financial risk this year than he was four years ago. He might bankrupt the party.

Contrast this with the McGovern effort. An excellent direct-mail campaign has netted $3.5 million from 115,000 contributors. Only a few are in the four-figure category although a separate operation has been successful among the big givers. Then there's Warren Beatty's concerts, which have netted slightly over $1 million in what is described as "instant money," inasmuch as Beatty takes care of all the arrangements, the tickets are purchased by a younger set, which normally doesn't contribute to campaigns, and all McGovern has to do is appear on stage for a few minutes and walk off with a check ranging from $75,000 upward.

It's safe to say the McGovern camp is already set up for the fall campaign in contrast to any of his competitors (Wallace, again, is something of an exception because of his success in passing the hat at rallies and the flow of contributions into his Montgomery, Ala., headquarters).

If money isn't the issue, then there's organization. McGovern's managers have put together one of the most effective political organizations, if not the *most* effective, ever seen in this country during the primary season. He's in a position to build on it. To make their task easier, workers computerized their lists (contributors, delegates, workers, etc.) so they can push a button and get the information they need. Humphrey's campaign was pathetic, disorganized. The Muskie organization was better—on paper—but it didn't move and Wallace, Jackson, Mills, Chisholm, etc., can't even claim an organization, as such.

To judge the effectiveness of the party regulars who are screaming about McGovern, it's useful to look back to the 1968 general election. There was a high correlation of states that voted for Humphrey at Chicago and backed Nixon in the fall: the South, large parts of the Midwest, the Rocky Mountain states. Only a few labor strongholds (Pennsylvania, Michigan, Washington) plus states with a heavy combination of antiwar and black votes (such as New York and Maryland) backed Humphrey. Plus Texas, because of the hard work of the Yarborough wing of the party. What reason is there to believe that these party regulars would perform even as well in 1972?

It brings us back to Ms. Wexler's question: What is the alternative? Perhaps she is right. For all practical purposes, the stop-McGovern movement does not even exist.

Paul R. Wieck

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"Texas Politicians Are Born to Flexibility"

Connally Watching

by Robert B. Semple, Jr.

Along with most other reporters who assembled in the White House press briefing room on May 16, the day John Connally resigned as secretary of the Treasury, I had come to believe that Connally would not remain indefinitely with the administration. But I was surprised by his timing. There had, of course, been persistent rumors that Connally and especially his wife Nellie were anxious to return to private life. But in the weeks before the announcement, he had been seeing every reporter in town, lavishing praise on his chief, and he had given Dick and Pat a fine dinner party in Texas. Only six days before his resignation, he had entertained a number of Treasury "regulars" in his office (among them Edwin L. Dale, Jr., of *The New York Times*) and had given Dale and the others the clear impression he planned to stay through Nixon's first term. Connally had seemed to be digging in; instead, as it happened, he was simply digging out. The three outside Connally-watchers I called when the briefing ended gave essentially the same explanation, although it may not have been their intention to do so. Ronnie Dugger, the Texas liberal journalist, observed that Connally "comes to a job on his own terms and leaves when he senses the presence of new opportunities or gets bored with old ones." Dugger called Connally "the greatest broken-field runner in American politics." George Christian, Lyndon Johnson's former press secretary and a long-time Connally loyalist, seemed the least surprised. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Christian argued, "Connally likes private life more than any other public official I know. He is a universal man, and he feels restricted when his is forced to spend all his time on one job." Robert Strauss, treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and another old friend, put the matter only slightly differently. He observed—as Dugger had—that Connally's long administrative relationship with Lyndon Johnson, spanning nearly three decades, had been interrupted frequently by quick and profitable forays into the world of private business; that he had lasted only a year as secretary of the navy under Kennedy; that he had served two terms as Texas governor but had to be "hog-tied" into serving a third; that the job Richard Nixon had summoned him to do—to help chart a new economic strategy—was now essentially finished. "It is part of John's pattern," Strauss observed, "to leave at the crest of the wave."

I am prepared to accept all or most of these explanations which, when added together, make Connally out to be a man of considerable independence and consuming restlessness. There was, in retrospect, an air of impermanence to his 17-month tenure at Treasury. John Connally was ready to move on.

The question is: where to? So far, most of the speculation about when and at what point Connally will stage another blazing reentry from his present holding pattern has yielded few answers. A dwindling but hardy band of Republicans who regard Spiro Agnew as a low-yield political weapon think that Nixon will yet invite Connally to share the Republican ticket this fall; others see Connally returning in a second Nixon administration, assuming there is one, as an assertive secretary of state, replacing a burned-out but hugely satisfied Henry Kissinger as the President's chief foreign policy adviser; still others believe that Connally may simply stay clear of the battle until 1976, when he could bid in his own right for the GOP nomination or, alternatively, stage a one-man operation aimed at retrieving his own Democratic Party from what he perceives to be an ominous leftward drift. One can find supporting evidence for all of these guesses in things that Connally has said or done; this reporter must simply confess that his lack of inside information is equaled only by his sense of anticipation. As of this writing, Connally was still zooming around the world, his every move charted and announced by the White House press office, which hasn't mentioned Agnew in weeks; Spiro himself had not been given any word. Perhaps Mr. Nixon was genuinely leaving his options open; perhaps he was merely playing games to create a bit of suspense on the Republican side.

One can address two other aspects of Connally's future with a greater degree of certainty. The first is that he is likely to remain within the Nixon orbit, in one capacity or another, for the rest of this year and probably for some time to come. Connally's history, the well-advertised chumminess of his personal relationship with the President, and his own public and private testimony on the subject lead one to believe that he will continue to provide Nixon with direct political support. The second is that Connally is not done with elective or appointive office—that is, public service as he understands it. If Connally is, as Christian in-

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sists, a private man, who enjoys the good down-home Texas life, he is also an impatient figure, ambitious and resonant, possessing a taste for fame and a curiously transparent sense of his own destiny.

These two sides of the man surfaced intermittently in an interview in Connally's Treasury office one week before he resigned. It was like all Connally interviews, the atmosphere pleasantly calculated to give the reporter an inflated sense of his importance and rapport. The office and desk were swept clean, as if some invisible maid had been summoned moments before to remove any evidence of competing claims for the secretary's attention. There were no interruptions, as if all other problems had been banished for the hour. The host himself was deferential – elegantly dressed in a muted grey plaid suit, his black wingtips gleaming in the dim window light, his attention riveted flatteringly upon his guest, as if there were nothing in the world he wished to do more than answer, for yet another inquisitor, the same questions he had been asked a thousand times before. The interviewer asked him to reconcile two reports, one being the vice presidential talk, and the other a rumor (which Connally confirmed) that he had engaged a prestigious real estate firm called Previews, Inc. to find a home for him in Europe. Did he intend to remove himself from active consideration and retire? "I'll answer that first by saying I don't think I'm going to be asked to run," he began. "But assume it might happen, and think about what that would mean in terms of years, of my life. A man would have to be a damn fool to take the vice presidency without wanting the presidency later on. Okay, I'm 55 years old. You've got four years in the number-two job, and another eight in the White House. That's twelve all told. Twelve and 55 is 67 years old. That doesn't leave much time for living. Frankly, I don't have enough fire of ambition to stay in politics all my life."

Well then, his interviewer asked (in so many words), why then do you even consider further public office? "One of the things that bothers me most about this country is the void in leadership," he said, pausing for a moment, presumably, to ask himself whether he should explain what he meant. "Look at the states. Find any big men there? No. Rockefeller's over the hill, Reagan's over the hill. In the cities? No. In the Congress, in my own party? No. Where are the leaders, the people who can put things together and rally the country?" He gestured toward the White House, which lay 300 yards from his window. It seemed a gesture of affection, not contempt. "Even the President," he said, uncharacteristically groping for words, "even the President, a good man, a brave man, a man who does the right things and gets too damn little credit for it, even he admits he's not much on rhetoric, on charisma." The interviewer suggested the inevitable: Connally had ruled out everyone but himself. He laughed. "Oh sure," he said, "hell yes. I've got some vanity. I've got some ambition. I like the prestige and what it brings. But I ask myself: Is it worth the trouble?"

The interviewer departed not long afterward convinced that Connally could and would contrive some way to answer that question in the affirmative.

Though it is now at an end, the relationship between the tall, graceful, Texas extrovert and the withdrawn and publicly uncertain President will stand for some time as one of the most interesting partnerships of the Nixon administration – at least as interesting as the intellectual symbiosis between Nixon and Henry Kissinger. Connally, of course, was a novel figure by himself, in part because his light shown so splendidly when set against the good grey tones of the other men with whom Nixon has chosen to surround himself. Much has already been written about the astonishing speed with which Connally rose, partly with Nixon's permission and partly through his own native chutzpa, to the top of the Nixon inner circle. The only other "outsider" (that is, one who was not with Nixon from the beginning of his political comeback, or before) who has done so well is George Shultz, now Connally's successor at Treasury. All who watched Connally's rise have their favorite stories of how and when he first served notice on the Nixon staff that he would not be bound by established rules and would expect to deal personally with Nixon on matters he considered important. Connally-watchers will undoubtedly be delighted to know that Connally remained as sassy as ever to the end. Not long ago, Connally was talking to a reporter in his office when his secretary buzzed him on the phone and informed him that a very important visitor was waiting outside and seemed to be growing impatient. Connally told his secretary to tell the visitor to wait. Twice more the buzzer sounded its urgent plea, twice more Connally ignored it. When the reporter emerged, he was astonished to find himself face to face with H. R. Haldeman, the President's powerful chief of staff who, as an almost inflexible rule, expects people to come to him. The interesting thing was that Connally was able to engage routinely in the sort of lese majesty that Wally Hickel tried once and got canned for. The President liked him, and so did the staff. Nervous novices even now in their dealings with the press and Congress, they admired Connally's winning ways with both. "I can preach it round or flat," Connally would say, and the boys from California ate it up.

The Nixon-Connally relationship may be rooted in some deeply and mysteriously psychological base, a possibility suggested one day over lunch by Peter G. Peterson, a brilliant, wry man who was then a member of the White House staff and now serves Nixon as secretary of Commerce. He said he thought the whole thing might be explained by what he called "Peterson's Theory of Interlocking Neuroses," which he said was useful in explaining certain marriages, and could

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be stated as follows: "The rocks in my head fill the holes in yours." The Nixon-Connally affair was indeed a remarkably two-sided, complementary relationship. Connally's capacity for salesmanship balanced Nixon's preference for backstage bargaining; Nixon's caution checked Connally's tendency (especially in overseas settings) to bluster and threaten; Connally's many friendships in Congress compensated for Nixon's reluctance to deal openly and regularly with the legislative branch. "He can tell it the way I think it," Nixon once said of Connally, Connally bashfully but hungrily conceding the point. But what really held the relationship together—and what is likely to hold it together in the forseeable future—were not the differences between the two men but their similarities, and chief among these was a shared view of the directions that American policy ought to take at home and abroad.

Connally was hardly an unknown quantity when Nixon started thinking seriously about hiring him a little less than two years ago. He was, of course, a Democrat, and as governor of Texas he had been a spender, almost doubling his state's budget during three terms in office. But Texas populists like Dugger maintain to this day that while Lyndon Johnson, no less than Connally a member of the Texas establishment, became in time a true "liberal," especially on civil rights, Connally administered the Great Society in Texas without enthusiasm, opposing the public accommodations laws and becoming the first governor to veto a war-on-poverty program, and in the end did only what was absolutely required of him to help minorities while leaving the corporate interests essentially undisturbed. On foreign policy, meanwhile, Connally inherited a kind of homegrown chauvinism which appears not to have softened with the passage of time, and which has fit neatly with Nixon's playing-field conception of national honor in Vietnam. Connally backed the war under Lyndon and, according to close friends, urged Lyndon to do battle with *The New York Times* and other eastern newspapers that were beginning to question America's role in Indochina. (Nobody took his advice until Nixon unleashed Spiro in 1969.) What Nixon got in Connally, in sum, was not a Democrat in the understood meaning of that term but a country cousin, as it were, of modern Republicanism, with no great passion for tax reform, a considerable sensitivity to corporate interests, a residual belief in the rightness of American conduct abroad, and an understanding of how arrangements are made at high levels.

Few would disagree that Nixon (though he did not know it at the time) picked the right man to preside over the imposition of wage-price controls over major segments of the economy. A free-enterpriser at Treasury would have made a disastrous salesman of Nixon's radical shift in economic policy; but Connally was nothing of the sort. A firm believer in the "partnership" between business, labor and government (though he likes some partners better than others), Connally sensed and persuaded Nixon that behind the business community's free-enterprise rhetoric lay a deep desire for social order and long-term wage stability. He felt sure that business would be the first to support controls, and he was right. Nixon derived great comfort from Connally's instincts, but it is worth pointing out that Connally invented neither phase one nor phase two of the new economic policy. The President himself keeps confusing the issue by calling Connally "my quarterback" and "architect," but Arthur Burns, George Shultz, Arnold Weber and Herbert Stein (chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers) did much of the tough work on the domestic side, while Peterson and Burns helped bring Nixon around to a new posture on monetary and trade policy. But it was Connally, more than anyone else, who persuaded Nixon that radical changes were saleable at home and abroad and who then, personally, proceeded to sell them. Given all the speculation about Connally's future, it is fair to ask what kind of economist he would make as President. The simple answer is this: He would prefer no controls, but realistically he foresees and could happily live with a benign corporate capitalism, in which business and labor would live within wage-price "parameters" (a favorite word of his) established in Washington. It is a vision that would not greatly disturb things as they are.

Nixon also looked to Connally for political counsel during moments of crisis on foreign policy. I have no way of knowing precisely what happened during those long sessions in the President's hideaway office in the executive office building during the last months of Connally's tenure, when the President was deciding to resume massive bombing of North Vietnam and, later, mining that country's principal harbors. The circumstantial evidence, however, is that Connally reinforced the President's instincts, urging him to act, to lead, to be decisive ("Sometimes," he told this reporter, in an interesting little comment the day after the President mined the harbors, "it is not what you decide but that you decide"). It is also known that after each major decision in which he participated Connally went to some lengths to pay tribute to the President. He told a group of reporters after the bombing had resumed that he was deeply "proud" of the President's actions, asserting—in language that Nixon might have wished to claim his own, having used it himself—that such actions were necessary to "preserve the country's credibility in the world and make sure that the President and his successor can continue to operate a viable foreign policy." Some of Connally's friends think that if the choice had been his to make (and he could have foreseen the consequences) Connally would never have embarked on the war. But the same could be said of Nixon, Johnson, and others; the relevant question is what he thinks now, and the answer is that he thinks like the President. After the

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mining decision, he again expressed his unqualified support and noted with some pride that when the President wanted to run through the options one final time before ordering the planes to take off toward the harbors, only Kissinger and he were invited back to the hideaway office for separate chats.

All of this should tell much about what kind of Vice President, or secretary of state, or even President this man might turn out to be, although it is always useful to keep in mind that Texas politicians are born to flexibility. But which is it to be? The smart money here these days says that Agnew will stay where he is (Nixon has long felt that people vote for the head of the ticket anyway, so why upset the party by dumping Spiro?), Rogers will move to the Supreme Court at the first opportunity, and Connally will move to State, a prospect that some of the bureaucrats there contemplate with mixed emotions. They desperately want somebody to take over their department and restore it to what they regard as its rightful place in foreign policymaking; Connally's occasional bursts of economic jingoism, however, have scared the hell out of them. Meanwhile, there is very little money on the prospect that Connally will stay and seek his future among the Democrats; the party seems to be moving away from him. I think, for what it is worth, that much will depend on the results of the Democratic convention, which precedes the Republican convention by nearly a month. McGovern paired with X, Y or Z or even Kennedy would probably not induce the President to make a switch; the center and right would still be his (or so his reasoning goes) even with Agnew on the ticket. But a Muskie-Kennedy or Humphrey-Kennedy combination would be something else again, for then all those centrist Democrats who worry about McGovern would start returning to their natural home. These do not seem to be likely pairings, but in the event they materialize Connally's stock could soar.

McGovern and America's Future

The Democrats On the Eve

by James MacGregor Burns

The Democratic Party seems about to embark on one of the biggest, boldest, and riskiest ventures in its long history. It is about to try to realize a dream that in various forms entranced Jacksonians, Free Soilers, Grangers, Bryanites—the dream that a movement with a great cause could create or capture a major party, win an electoral majority, take over the presidency and perhaps Congress, and use the machinery of government to carry out its program. This strategy, on the face of it the simplest and neatest of political operations is, in fact, in the American context fraught with infinite frustration and complexity, as well as huge possibilities.

Such a movement requires a leader of absolute principle and conviction, a teaching, preaching type of man who personifies rather than merely articulates the movement's goals—requires, in short, a George McGovern. In the 50 years since he was born in a hamlet in southeastern South Dakota, the son of an evangelical Methodist minister, he has shown a steadily developing sense of purpose and mission that can be compared in this century, among American national leaders, only with Woodrow Wilson's. Today his friends and critics—and here I depend largely on Robert Sam Anson's probing and revealing biography—seem agreed on at least one thing: McGovern really *believes* in what he says. "McGovern is the most predictable—the most readily knowable—of all the candidates," Anson says. "He could be called an ideologue, except that the ideology he so faithfully follows is a patchwork of his own creation. A closer explanation is that he has developed a conceptual framework into which, as one friend puts it, 'everything fits'." In William James's term McGovern was once-born; there

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is no indication of any identity crisis or major conversion during his late youth or early manhood.

In his 20 years in politics, to be sure, McGovern has backed and filled like most American politicians. He voted in Congress in such a way, especially in election years, as to placate moderate and conservative South Dakotans but not those on Capitol Hill who keep the scorecards on liberal legislators. At one point last summer, when Nixon seemed to be winding down the Vietnam war, McGovern tried to downgrade it as a central campaign issue; war protesters and the President's reescalation forced him to focus on it again. He made gestures to George Wallace's followers and he is currently negotiating with Democratic party centrists and brokers. He even changed his clothing and hair style to get rid of the square prairie look.

But one gets the impression that these are merely tactical compromises that the South Dakotan manages without impairing his "conceptual framework" or basic principles. Thus he fervently embraced Henry Wallace's cause in 1948 only to be disillusioned by the fanaticism of some of Wallace's followers; but McGovern says today that he still thinks Wallace was "essentially right" on foreign policy. For a time as a freshman congressman he was a World Federalist; he let his membership lapse but says "I still go along with a lot of what they say. They have a lot of good ideas." Even his admirers are put off by his almost Jesuitical self-righteousness and by his tendency, like Woodrow Wilson's, to couch policy issues in moralistic terms. Unlike the typical American politician, who takes expedient positions and then makes a virtue of necessity by incorporating them into his credo, McGovern has made clear that his tactical concessions do not alter his convictions and that he will compromise no more than is necessary to win elections. What then would he do in the highest office? Perhaps he might be "coopted" by the White House, with its enmeshing machinery and multiple foreign and domestic constituencies, but one gets the impression that McGovern would, initially at least, seek to impose his ideas on the institutions.

A movement aiming at the presidency needs not only a committed leader but a consecrated band of activists, and this McGovern has in abundance. Urged to work within the system, the young people have done so with predictable passion and persistence and unpredictable finesse and sophistication. They have shown a mastery of both the new politics of media and message and the old politics of reaching, canvassing, and delivering voters to the polls. Some of the most important smoke-filled rooms of 1972 have been run not by oldtime bosses but by McGovernites expert in caucus politics.

Could McGovern win? The Free Soilers, the Grangers, the Silverites, and in this century the Progressives of 1912, 1924 and 1948—and, on the right, the anti-New Deal Liberty Leaguers of the 1930s and both the Wallace and Goldwater conservatives of the 1960s—all these credo movements failed to gain the kind of power they sought. A key difference between the McGovern cause and the earlier movements, however, is that the latter were organized around persisting domestic issues in American life, while McGovern gained his political impetus largely from the thousands of activists and millions of voters outraged by Vietnam. A political battle dominated by a foreign policy issue has unpredictable, even explosive possibilities. We know a good deal about the relation of the earlier movements to the domestic issues that mobilized them; we know, for example, that whatever the success or failure of the movement, the evils it attacked could not be manipulated out of existence. A Pierce or Buchanan could not have abolished slavery, even if they had wanted to; a Cleveland or McKinley could not eradicate low wages or farm prices.

Vietnam presents a sharply different set of possibilities. Some contend that Nixon is falling deeper and deeper into a trap; that Hanoi, sensing (and perhaps exaggerating) the pressure on him to achieve a settlement, will harden its position in order to gain maximum concessions from the President during the election campaign and/or to help defeat him in the November balloting. But the scenario might assume a very different form, and we must always take into account the Communists' perceptions and misperceptions of political developments in this country, as well as our own. Hanoi might calculate that the President has a good chance of winning in any event and that the worst possible outcome from its standpoint would be a lame-duck Nixon with four years in office to protect the "honor" of the nation. The Communists might agree to accept his best offer at the climax of the fall campaign. Nixon for his part has a number of possible options; for example, if Hanoi makes further gains in attacks this summer or early fall, he could offer a cease-fire in place that would, explicitly or not, concede large sections of northern South Vietnam and of the Central Highlands to the Communists for good. If on the other hand both Hanoi and Nixon take hard lines during the next months the President could go to the voters in a crisis atmosphere on a rally-round-the-flag platform—a course of action that still has a greater vote-winning potential than most doves are willing to concede. In any event Nixon is such an expert in face-saving and political cosmetology that one must respect his ability to manipulate Vietnam as an issue, at least temporarily for campaign purposes. And of one thing we can be sure—no matter how drastic the apparent or actual shift of policy he undertakes, there will be no apologies, no looking back—and no fitting into conceptual frameworks.

Could McGovern still win if Nixon somehow neutralized Vietnam as an issue? It has become fashionable to point out that there is a striking difference

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between the kinds of voters mobilized and won over in presidential primaries and those that a presidential candidate must attract in November; Austin Ranney concludes, for example, that "presidential primary electorates, like those in primaries for lesser offices, are demographically quite *un*representative of their nonvoting fellow partisans"—in about the same degree that national convention delegates have been unrepresentative. But Ranney and others concede that reforms such as the McGovern-Fraser Commission guidelines could make the primaries more representative, and perhaps these reforms have done so in 1972. Vietnam has cut so deeply across the whole spectrum of groups and classes that it will immensely widen the activist forces supporting McGovern. The South Dakotan would have many other factors working for him—not only Nixon's record but the influx of younger, better educated, and (paradoxically) more affluent groups into the electorate, the momentum he has aroused, the enormous potential of voters registered as Democrats and of independents leaning toward a liberalized Democratic party, the smoldering disaffection with all established leadership, and his own proved ability to appeal to large constituencies with skill and force. All these factors contradict the Goldwater analogy, even aside from the obvious difference between taking a position in advance of the direction of events and taking a position with the rearguard.

The odds must be rated as at least even that McGovern can defeat Nixon in the fall. The more crucial question is whether he can win with the momentum necessary to carry out his and his party's program.

All this is to assume that McGovern will win the nomination, and some reporters and politicians are not conceding this. There is no need at this point to war-game the convention; we will know its outcome soon enough. But it is worth observing that if there is no first-ballot decision the convention will have, at least for a brief moment and to a small degree, an opportunity to act as conventions classically have acted—as an entity representing the whole party, including its national leadership, and capable of calculating what is best not only for a candidate and his cause but for the party and even the country. Conventions are dominated less by "bosses" like Mayor Daley than by state and congressional officeholders who collectively represent the concerns of the whole party, if only because their individual fortunes are so closely related to its political health and to the vote-pulling power of its presidential candidate. And conventions are influenced too by political gurus who actually are concerned about the long-run role of their party.

For some years now conventions have been in the habit of endorsing the frontrunners in the presidential primaries and hence have acted largely as plebiscitary instruments rather than as deliberative assemblies where political leaders and rank-and-file delegates could jointly make decisions. McGovern is only the latest of the candidates to command probable first-ballot success; the irony is that no convention in recent history has had a more arresting choice not only of contrasting candidates but of alternative political strategies, and not only of ways of winning an election but of strategies to win real power and use it to effect desired change.

One of these alternatives would be the Hubert Humphrey style of stumping and the Humphrey style of government—and much the same could be said of Edmund Muskie. We do not need to guess wildly as to how Humphrey would campaign; doubtless he would again exhibit the endurance and fortitude of 1968 and the aggressiveness of California 1972. Nor should his kind of fence-mending be dismissed as merely the old politics. Coalition-building—the kind of piecing together of interests, sections, nostalgias and hopes that Humphrey is so versed in—will inevitably be part of a two-party democratic politics, indeed of any politics save that of a totalitarian state. The issue is what groups are appealed to, on the basis of what promises, and at what cost to other goals. Humphrey's kind of campaigning, combined with the somewhat greater tactical flexibility he might enjoy on Vietnam policy, could produce an outcome even closer than that of 1968.

No matter how stoutly Senator Kennedy insists that he is not a candidate and would not accept a draft he will be a factor at the convention. His decision not even to be a delegate to the convention—a move interpreted by the press as a decisive act of renunciation—means that he will be better able to maintain his neutrality and detachment; his most advantageous lodgement during convention week might be a ski chalet in the Andes. At this point even the most categorical statement of unavailability, of Sherman-like proportions, could not wholly remove him from consideration if a deadlock should develop. In that event—and if the convention should act like an oldtime convention—the Kennedy record and potential for winning might offer an irresistible temptation. Few in Miami would doubt his capacity to combine the McGovern and Humphrey strategies—that is, to appeal to the anti-Vietnam vote, to mobilize a new coalition of the poor, the black and the young, and to coalesce this coalition with the traditional bases of the Democratic Party in blue-collar workers, the lower middle class, the aged, the older ethnic groups, and the intelligentsia. The Kennedy mystique is still something to reckon with. To watch the senator advocate amnesty "for those young men who saw the things we now see, but saw them sooner and who did the only thing they could" before a mainly working-class audience in a Catholic parish hall, amid thunderous applause, is to sense the almost terrifying extent to which a magnetic personality can engulf or de-fang the most controversial issues. There is little doubt that a Kennedy campaign for President next fall would touch off a burst

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of interest and intensity of involvement that would turn the election into a contest rivaling the epic encounters of McKinley and Bryan in 1896 or Roosevelt and Alf Landon in 1936. This is not to assume that Kennedy would win. One has the impression rather that the Democrats would be doubling their bets with a Kennedy candidacy—that he would polarize the electorate and either fail or win in a huge sweep. A McGovern-Kennedy ticket could have the same effect.

The stakes are the crucial thing. The question facing the Democrats is whether they can win not only an election but a government. If the party in Miami has the opportunity to consider alternative campaign styles and tactics to beat Nixon, it will have the even more portentous choice of strategies for governing the nation. Each of the leading candidates would offer his own style of governance. Humphrey or Muskie, accustomed to the old institutions that fragment power among rival politicians responding to separate and conflicting constituencies, would employ the ancient arts of "boodle, blarney, and bludgeon" to pull a team together. Kennedy would utilize the arts to the full but he also would command the ability to reach and mobilize the voters in presidential and congressional elections and hence to influence noncooperative politicians by threatening to attack them at their political base. And McGovern?—the frontrunner's strategy of governing brings us back to the great venture on which the Democrats seem likely to embark.

As President, George McGovern would have certain advantages. The mere fact that he would have made his program so clear to the voters—assuming he can clarify some of the mysteries of his fiscal proposals—would lend it credibility and force as a general guide to administration policy. The country would be ready for change; it would expect change. The enthusiasm of the McGovern activists would spill over into the labyrinths of power. On the other hand, expectations might be too high. McGovern and the Democratic party would have entered in on the most sweeping set of commitments—about Vietnam, about taxes, about poverty, about health, and all the rest—of any major party in this century. McGovern would have promises to keep—and being McGovern he would want to keep them. Certainly he would want to pull down the curtain on the charade in which the Democratic party for decades has gained power on the basis of sweeping liberal commitments and then has handed over much of that power to conservatives on Capitol Hill.

Not only would McGovern (or any other newly elected Democratic President) encounter the problems that every liberal activist faces on entering the White House—the limited talent available for new governmental initiatives and techniques; the conservative veto centers liberally distributed through the two houses of Congress; the bureaucrats entrenched in their specialized skills and their mutual protection enclaves. Not only would he confront the dire fiscal and administrative problems that the Brookings Institution study *Setting National Priorities: The 1973 Budget* has so sharply delineated. McGovern would also be threatened by his own conceptions of government, or at least by those of many of his followers. For in the McGovern camp one finds countless liberals and radicals who not only oppose conservative leadership but all leadership, including its own. After watching John Kenneth Galbraith and other notables be defeated for convention committee positions in the Massachusetts (McGovern) delegation one member cried out: "It's 1917 all over again. They're shooting all the officers."

This instinct against leadership is linked to a theory that, just as one can gain power by calm and logical and candid presentations to the people, so one can exercise power by the same kind of communication with fellow politicians and with agency chiefs. This theory in part is a reaction against the view, popular some years ago during the Kennedy and Johnson presidencies, that the essence of presidential leadership is the chief executive's ability to manage and to manipulate, to stay on top of the heap, to safeguard his reputation as the ablest of the political pros, to outpersuade and to out-maneuver the opposition, to deliver a political karate chop or strike for the jugular if necessary. Just as the importance of these presidential qualities was exaggerated in the "tough-guy" school of presidential power, so it is being unduly minimized today. In fact the essence of the presidency has always been the President's power to manipulate *and* to inspire, to maneuver *and* to set a direction, to arouse the people behind a course of action *and* to outflank the bad guys or cut them off at the pass. McGovern would have to demonstrate both qualities or he would fail as President.

The controlling question is whether McGovern or any other activist Democrat could enter the White House with the kind of backing necessary to put through his program. It is not 1912, when Wilson could capitalize on a decade of fresh and critical thinking during the Progressive Era. Nor is it 1932, or 1936, when Roosevelt could exploit the memories and fears of the "Hoover depression" to build a vast constituency for the New Deal. Nor is it 1960, when Kennedy could score off a sluggish administration without having to take on an incumbent Republican President. After years of protest and upheaval the anti-establishment cause is divided not only into rival liberal-left camps but also between Wallaceites and McGovernites.

"The country is way ahead of its political leadership," McGovern has said. "People want new standards, new directions. I think 1972 could be a watershed, the beginning of a new era. I tremble for the future of this country if we don't undertake fundamental change after 1972." But where is the impetus to come from in order to enact such fundamental change? McGovern could even win in a sweep without changing the com-

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plexion of Congress. The Senate is not likely to be more Democratic or more liberal than it is now; the House, composed mainly of representatives from noncompetitive districts, hardly changes in make-up and outlook from election to election. After years of criticism the anti-majoritarian devices in Congress are essentially untouched. While those devices exist McGovern cannot possibly enact a sweeping reform program; any major tax reform, for example, would be slowly bled to death in the present House if not killed outright.

McGovern faces a threat, moreover, that earlier reform Presidents could hardly have imagined. Since his movement has sprung mainly out of anti-Vietnam protest he must deal with the possibility that, once he has ended American involvement soon after his inaugural, as he has repeatedly promised to do, the movement sustaining him will lose its vitality. This would constitute a crisis not only for McGovern but for American liberalism. It would pose the question of whether liberals could become as aroused and as organized over poverty and other domestic social ills as they have over the war in Southeast Asia. Recharging the movement and switching it from foreign to domestic policy would call for inspired leadership.

McGovern, in short, could not enact the bulk of his program in the first "Hundred Days." He, like John Kennedy, would need at least a thousand. But in the long run certain political forces could work for him.

One of these is the movement toward party realignment. We may be going through one of those long volcanic upheavals during which the political landscape is cleft by new fault lines and voters arrayed in new and persisting patterns. McGovern's nomination —and certainly Kennedy's but probably not Humphrey's or Muskie's—would accelerate this process. But the political pay-off would materialize only in the long run, as the great body of southern conservative Democrats not only came to the threshold of the Republican Party, as they have done, but crossed it for good, and as the Democrats created a whole new foundation of southern electoral strength among blacks and liberal whites. In the short run—that is, during the election campaign and during the early period of his presidency—McGovern's political base would be narrowed by the process of political arrangement. He would lose the South to Nixon or perhaps Wallace; he would antagonize the southern potentates in Congress. Few pragmatic politicians would take this risk or pay this price, but of course McGovern is understood to be a nonpragmatist.

The other potential force working for a liberal activist President will be shaped to a major degree in the Miami convention. While the McGovern guidelines for greater participation and fairer representation have been getting most of the headlines, Democratic Party reformers have also been working in a very different direction—toward a national membership base for the party, an invigorated leadership system at the top, and annual policymaking conferences. In effect these planners, headed by Congressmen James S. O'Hara and Donald M. Fraser, would create something the Democrats have never had—a centrally led, nationally responsible, programmatic party with extensive grassroots involvement in its ruling councils and policy statements. The question is whether the new party structure could be created quickly enough to be of help to the next activist Democratic President—for example in his efforts to hold or boost his strength on Capitol Hill during a midterm congressional election.

Both as candidate and as President, McGovern would face a dilemma over this issue. Even during the election campaign a revitalized national party might threaten the autonomy of state and local party leaders. Ultimately a nationalized party, like realignment, would threaten the power centers of the congressional party. It would be hard for a liberal Democrat in the White House to sit out this struggle. Would McGovern intervene? It is well known that he rebuilt the Democratic Party in South Dakota from the ground up; yet on closer inspection it appears that the main effect was to boost his own candidacy for office; within a few years the party was evidently moribund again as an organization. Edward Kennedy sponsored an ambitious effort to revitalize and democratize the Democratic Party in Massachusetts, but the reform proposals were not put into effect. For either man as President, the gains from trying to strengthen the party would come at best only in the long run. But the stakes would be enormous here too. For reformation of the party could mean that a popular movement such as McGovern's some day could actually put its program into effect—in short, that the majority could really govern.

Thus the Democrats are on the eve not only of a convention choice for standard bearer in 1972 but of a series of decisions that could alter the shape of the nation's politics for many years to come. If nominated and elected George McGovern, as a historian, would bring to the White House the most considered view of the processes of historical change since Wilson entered it in 1913. He believes in neither the Tolstoyan thesis that history is the product of vast, amorphous and indecipherable social movements nor in the theory that great men hold history in their grip but, says Anson, in the notion that able leaders, by force of will or intellect or chance, can guide or channel the direction and pace of events. As a historian too he must have his eye on the symbolic importance of 1972; and one way to pose the question the Democrats face is whether the bicentennial is to be a year of fruition for many years of Democratic hopes and struggles, or whether it will be merely a new beginning, another desperate effort to pull the liberal Democrats together and get the nation moving again—or even a year with the revolutionary potential of 1776.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

La Salamandre

(New Yorker)

Charles, Dead or Alive

Walking in Berne, in the early '60s, I passed a café full of hippies. A Swiss hippie! The idea was something like a Swiss sailor. Well, there *are* Swiss sailors (they have a merchant marine), and there are young Swiss rebels. And there is a new Swiss filmmaker—new to this country, at least—who has been a Swiss sailor and is now a rebel.

But he is not particularly young. Alain Tanner was born in Geneva in 1929, took a degree in economics, went to sea for a time, went to England in 1955, worked at the British Film Institute and for BBC-TV, returned (after some film work in Paris) to Switzerland, and made numerous documentaries for Swiss TV. In 1969 he made his first fiction feature, in 1971 his second. Both these pictures are now being shown here, and are welcome. Let's begin with the second.

La Salamandre is named for that mythical creature, the salamander, which can survive fire. It concerns two young Swiss men, both writers, and a girl. Pierre is a journalist who is commissioned to write a TV documentary about Rosemonde, who had been involved a year earlier in a shooting in which her uncle was wounded. Pierre needs help and calls in Paul, a more imaginative type, who supports himself as a housepainter and writes only when he pleases.

Pierre interviews Rosemonde and her uncle, and makes all the right intelligent, sympathetic journalistic moves. Paul at first refuses to meet Rosemonde, goes off to his suburban house outside Geneva, and works on his version of the script with some facts and much intuition. Eventually he does meet her at Pierre's place after she has spent a night with the latter.

Rosemonde is the focus of Tanner's story as she is of Pierre-Paul's. She is the seventh of ten children, in her early twenties, had an illegitimate child when she was 17, was sent to live with the uncle who used her as a drudge, and now works in a sausage factory. (She soon quits for a shoe shop; and she soon gets fired there for a peculiar but quite credible prankishness.)

She first appears as a commonplace girl. She is revealed gradually, in a different sense, as even more commonplace than we thought: she is baffled, shrewd, scared, libidinous, hungry for something she can't define—a thoroughly contemporary young human being, teased by a consumer society into aspirations she can't fulfill, standards without resonance or sanity, emotional complications without the possibility of complete investment. Near the end Paul asks her whether she really did shoot her uncle. (She has maintained for a year that her uncle did it himself by accident.) Slowly she smiles, and confesses it. That smile—the bleakness, the silly pride in at least one small accomplished private act—is sad and awful.

The film shows her moving, something like an older version of Antoine in Truffaut's *Four Hundred Blows*, from clumsy attempts at conformity to a break-out, with her future uncertain and unpromising. Equally important is the effect she has on the two men. The chief point is that, after spending much time with her, sleeping with her, visiting her village with her, finding out more and more about her, the two men are unable to write the TV script. They become aware that, through her, they have touched more than they are able to deal with. They pass on from her life; she has no options, she has to remain in her life.

Tanner wrote the screenplay in collaboration with John Berger—I assume it is the same John Berger who is the English Marxist art critic and novelist. It is written as a film, to be fulfilled by faces and places and spaces, and yet, to judge by subtitles from the French, it is *written:* literate and pointed. Like Rosemonde herself, the story is ingeniously commonplace—it is made out of common enough events in such a way that they dramatize the forces beneath them.

The main influence on Tanner, obviously, is Godard, of the "bourgeois-revolutionary" period. The tone and intent of the piece are conceived as if to catch the characters and the film form itself by surprise, yet with an overall artistic discrimination. The root effect is of newsreel that is allowed to stray past its conventional boundaries so that we can see *behind* the figures, so to speak. There are lesser Godardian doodlings: Tanner calls the picture "a black-and-white film in color," for instance. And I'm aware that *La Salamandre* might be somewhat less interesting if it were French, might seem "one more," though better. The fact of its being Swiss, of its seeing a tiny prosperous country as a cage instead of a haven, increases its interest, as a kind of spiritual-esthetic-political travelogue.

But it would have real virtues if it were the hundredth Swiss film I'd seen instead of the first since *The Eternal Mask* (1937). Tanner's compositions and camera angles have a sense of concern, of a human trying to look freshly but not

(continued on page 28)

Films Worth Seeing

Cabaret. A clever Broadway musical director, Bob Fosse, makes a clever film musical. Isherwood's Berlin filtered through "smart" show biz.

A Day in the Death of Joe Egg. Utterly unsentimental story about a young English couple with a spastic child. Intelligence, anger, sexiness, and wit are the tone, not pathos.

The Hospital. Paddy Chayefsky's script ultimately cops out, as one would expect, but the dialogue crackles and so does George C. Scott as the menopausal medical chief.

Malcolm X. A straight, clean documentary, synopsized from the autobiography, that gets its power from the power of its subject, a phenomenal man.

Pocket Money. Paul Newman and Lee Marvin rape every rule of Western drama—and make us relax and enjoy it. Very amiable Americana.

The Sorrow and the Pity. Will surely rank among the best documentaries. Marcel Ophuls has woven the occupied France of the '40s with the survivors of the present to make a 4½ hour gem.

Tokyo Story. Yasujiro Ozu's gentle masterpiece about life as transition and permanence, parents watching their children become parents, while the world changes and stays the same. Superb.

SK

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Sedulus on TV

Prime Time Bedlam

The antics of the Federal Communications Commission might make a good movie—a sort of courtroom flick with Nick Johnson as the forensic whiz and honest injun, and Chairman Burch as the villain rising to say "I object" and running over to the White House to plot with supervillain Clay T. Whitehead, Director of White House Telecommunications Policy. The current squabble about the televising of the German summer Olympics would serve well as the main incident in this tale, which would not after all, if my critical muses tell me right, turn out to be a hero-villain melodrama but something grander, a warm and human document mebbe—for if there is one thing the jousting commissioners of FCC are successfully demonstrating it is that even the Washington bureaucracy has people in it and they bleed—something the outside world needs to know.

On the Olympic scene ABC submitted to the FCC, in March, a "request for waiver of the prime time access rule." The rule prohibits a network from programming more than three of the four prime time hours nightly for its affiliates, but ABC wanted to present 3½ solid hours of Olympics for ten weeknights (Monday-Friday, August 28-Sept. 1 and Sept. 4-8, 1972). The material was not to be live but an edited coverage of events earlier the same day. The FCC lay low for a couple of months and then *denied* the request, with Chairman Burch issuing a stinging dissenting statement ("we are witnessing regulation gone mad") and Johnson writing a gloating dissent from dissenting. So many little niggling issues have seldom been assembled in seven mimeographed pages, but between the niggles there *was* bleeding. Since the denial of ABC's request the network has come back to the commission asking that it reconsider its "hasty action," and the commission has (by the same 4-3 vote that produced the original denial) refused to reconsider. To think that all this pleasant bedlam has been brought about in honor not of 3½ hours but *one half hour* of prime time.

The prime time access rule was adopted last fall by a bitterly divided commission to minimize network domination of programming, and to encourage competition by both independent producers (who will now theoretically have new markets for their products) and local affiliates (who will now theoretically have to make more programming decisions themselves). Aside from prime time, networks can program as much as they want. The first year of the rule can be discounted since the stations were given a year before being obliged to face up to the teeth of the rule, which are that they can't fill in the extra hour with off-network syndicated series shows such as "I Dream of Jeannie." A few exceptions have been made, notably the syndicated "Wild Kingdom," of which the FCC approved continuance; but when Campbell's Soup petitioned to continue "Lassie" on the grounds that that old sweetie was in the same educational league as "Wild Kingdom," the FCC said no. The basic notion behind the rule is that beginning in the fall the stations will have to do some *positive* programming themselves, and in the process will start doing community shows and the like.

All this, then, is the background for the ABC request for waiver. ABC wants its extra half hour so it can start earlier than 8 p.m. (its original petition contained mumblings about depriving the chillun, or keeping them up late). One of the interesting questions is whether or not ABC, which has contractual arrangements with its advertisers for the full 3½ hours now denied, made such arrangements before or after the rule went into effect officially, last fall. Nick Johnson in his dissent from dissenting suggests that the network entered upon its contracting with the confidence of one who felt sure a waiver would be granted, and points out that the rule had been impending since 1959. Whatever may be the hidden truth the outsider is led quickly to marvel at the close focus with which the network moguls look at their world (why should a shift from the 7:30-11:00 slot to an 8-11:30 slot be cause for a major confrontation?). It is niggle like this that of course bogs Washington down daily in all its agencies, with the lobbyists forever indignantly campaigning for their equivalent of that half hour; but in the present instance we have a big issue behind the niggle. The issue is who's in charge here anyway, with Chairman Burch saying, hell the networks are in charge and we can't (and shouldn't?) do anything, and Johnson in opposition looking about for some sort of foothold where the FCC can start to begin to commence to become a significant regulatory force.

But is the prime time access rule the place to begin to start to commence? Chairman Burch doesn't think so; Johnson does. At least Johnson believes the rule should be given a genuine year of trial, as apparently does CBS. Only NBC has positively asked for its discontinuance, on the grounds that the first year showed it was no good. As for Sedulus, well Sedulus has been so fuzzed by all the mimeo about the rule that he has become a full-blown know-nothing; but in his ignorance he wishes that the breakthrough reform to be worked for were a bit more *visible* than the access rule, as knocking out the cigaret ads was, and as getting the headache-pill creeps to be honest would be. The average viewer simply won't know he's being saved by the access rule, and what he doesn't know may hurt the rule as a political venture. Nick Johnson is a good enough showman himself to know that what is needed is a *dramatic* (even if minor) breakthrough, and so far the access rule seems to achieve drama only for insiders.

Anyway the current squabble is good ideology. The issues are basically so big that though the Olympics will get televised the denouement for neither private interest nor federal agency will occur until after next November. Sedulus hopes against hope that we *will* get a White House turnover that will give Washington a new start at regulatory integrity next November, and he also hopes the dear squabbling FCC will survive and thrive as a commission beyond the election, and eventually stagger and stumble happily home to useful public-service power. For these commissioners, whatever their nasty differences, are speaking their minds openly and conscientiously on essentially big public issues, as they should. We accordingly know where they are and who keeps bugging them, and we should congratulate them for these efforts even though the ABC waiver-battle has something of the flavor of *Alice in Wonderland.*

Notes on Contributors

Saul Maloff *is the author of the novel* Happy Families. *Oxford Press will issue a new book of poems,* Fields of Grace, *by* Richard Eberhart *in the fall.* Malcolm Cowley *was associate editor of* NR *from 1929 to 1944.*

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Gurus Instead of Art

Dawn and the Darkest Hour: A Study of Aldous Huxley

by George Woodcock

(Viking; $7.95)

In mid-career Aldous Huxley became a problem for criticism; nearly a decade after his death he remains one—of a severe and perplexing order, though no more than a handful of critics bother to think of him at all. George Woodcock meets the problem head-on from the outset. What now, a half-century after the early novels upon which his literary reputation still precariously rests, and in light of the final—or Los Angeles—years, are we to make of Huxley's achievement?

Woodcock's first response to Huxley's work was typical of the generation for whom Spain made the great difference—with the crucial distinction that Woodcock has now come to terms, however qualified, with Huxley's later work. For Woodcock, reading early Huxley in his provincial English youth had a liberating effect which began with a belated reading of Wells and Shaw—a sense (in Stephen Spender's words) of "freedom from all sorts of things such as conventional orthodoxies, officious humbug, sexual taboos, respect for establishments"; but for him, and for others who admired Huxley as a "personification of the critical spirit in the decades between the great wars," the work took a turn "unfamiliar and even repugnant" and Woodcock remembers reading *Eyeless in Gaza* with "bewilderment and a sense of betrayal." Here was something that, though published on the eve of the Spanish Civil War, described a conversion to mystical religion and suggested "that such a spiritual evolution was not only compatible with pacifist and decentralist politics . . . but was perhaps the only condition under which they could become effective." That the ironist and wit of *Crome Yellow* and *Antic Hay* should succumb to obscurantism seemed nothing less than an abject surrender to the enemy—and a double betrayal by reason of its unfortunate timing.

But in time Woodcock came to regard *Eyeless in Gaza* as in every way Huxley's "most significant" work—the best, richest, deepest, most serious: in fact the work toward which all the others had been blindly evolving. How Woodcock came to this position, which makes his book something of a "personal testament," involves a spiritual turning of his own, which has a determining effect on his critical overview. Still a "pacifist, a social decentralist and a political libertarian" as he was in 1936 and as Huxley remained to the end of his life, Woodcock is no longer a "militant agnostic who halted before atheism only because it seemed another dogmatic position." He now believes God exists; that the "universe, in all its complexity and order, is not accidental." Yet he recognizes no personal God, and sees no "function in organized worship" beyond the assertion of fellowship; and though he does "recognize an efficacy in prayer," he cannot dissociate this "from my recognition of the existence of telepathic communication" and "cannot see either as more than unexplained aspects of the phenomenal world." At variance in these and other respects with Huxley's view of the religious life, Woodcock nonetheless finds the novelist's "development of great psychological interest" and admires "above all the courage with which he embarked on a quest of dubious outcome that aroused first the mockery and afterwards no more than the grudging tolerance of the intellectual and literary world." The complications of Woodcock's view are deepened by the further conviction that the "views of art and the artist's function which Huxley developed after 1936 were not only false in themselves, but also unfortunate in their effect on his work."

Woodcock's argument, stripped down, is that far from being an aberration in Huxley's career as novelist and man, *Eyeless In Gaza* is the climactic fulfillment and resolution of themes and tensions present in his work from the very beginning; that Huxley's mind had always been "divided and searching," at once fascinated and repelled by the "life of meretricious intellectuality and futile moneyed gaiety" pranced by the Bright People of Mayfair and the Bohemians of Chelsea. In hindsight the course of the

You Think They Are Permanent But They Pass

You think they are permanent but they pass
And only contemplation serves to save their memory.
You are in the Pan-World building with the leaders.
They all seem real, they all seem permanent

But soon you are in the Pan-World building with the past.
How closely and with what immediacy
You scrutinize the features of each noted face,
President, old poet, Supreme Court chief justice,

Secretary to the United Nations,
How lively their speech, lively their looks,
As all together in one banquet place
You would think there would be no end to this.

Who in the reality of his high days
Thinks of the destitutions of the night?
You think they are permanent but they pass
To feed ravens of the ravenous past.

RICHARD EBERHART

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career can and should be seen all of a piece: a quest from the "early brightness" of *Crome Yellow* through the gradual darkening of vision in *Those Barren Leaves* to the "sardonic pessimism," Huxley's "descent into Hell," of the "terminal novel of this first period," *Point Counter Point*. Once arrived at this point, Woodcock goes all the way: "It was indeed a parallel to the classic journey into the underworld that in the heroic myths precedes victory and in religious myths precedes enlightenment; it [*Point Counter Point*] was in many ways a novel of no return."

Light and darkness as metaphor—the search for light *in* darkness—had special meaning, of course, for a man who was tormented by partial blindness for much of his life. And since the light wouldn't come of itself Huxley made a desperate grab for it at the end of *Those Barren Leaves* by suddenly removing the "Satanic" character Calamy (who bears the name, Woodcock notes, of two celebrated 17th-century divines) to a mountaintop, there to commence the contemplative life—the Satanic being "after all merely the Godly inverted, and the man who has once come into that circle of existence where powers of good and evil compete has the possibility of choosing either direction."

Not in a novel he doesn't; perhaps in theology, but not in a novel. In theology it may be that he who sins hardest and most persistently is closer to redemption than an ordinary sometime sinner, but in a novel it was the hand of Huxley not that of God that plucked that character up to the lofty preselected scene of his cloudy meditations on the "great secret, the beauty and the mystery." Woodcock, of course, knows this and calls it by its right name—"bathos on the verge of sentimentality"—and Huxley knew it too, though not immediately. At first he thought the novel "cuts more ice . . . than the others and is more explicit and to the point"; but a few months later he saw it for what it was:

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"jejune and shallow and off the point."

Whatever case can be made for *Eyeless in Gaza*, Woodcock makes brilliantly. Whether he makes it persuasively will depend largely on one's willingness to believe that Anthony's conversion from existential emptiness to transcendent fullness has in fact been compellingly achieved in the literary (and psychological) sense. Granted the novel's strengths—and it possesses not a few of Huxley's old virtues—and granted the fineness of Woodcock's structural and thematic analysis, the case is very far from demonstrated. When Woodcock has sorted out the novel's chronological dislocations and discontinuities, he argues that it "becomes a tale of conversion against a social background in which the desperate futilities of the twenties merge into the equally desperate searchings for faith in the thirties"; that a pattern emerges "which chronologically minded man does not comprehend until, as the structure of *Eyeless in Gaza* urges him to do, he steps out of time. The novel assumes an organic rather than a mechanical form."

Only for the already converted, I think. To disclose that what had seemed to Anthony discontinuity is in reality a unity can amount to no more than perceiving coherence because one wants to perceive coherence; it is an act of faith—or the will to faith—rather than of art; of intention rather than imagination. Formally, we may grant, the novel attains an organic unity, in that the fractured life is assembled into a semblance of wholeness; which is not for a moment to grant their assimilation in the mystical sense of either term, unity or wholeness. These are grafted onto another sort of plant.

The argument takes a strange turn, as if Woodcock were debating his judgment with himself and losing; or gaining no better than a draw. He remarks that the "attitudes" Huxley expressed were unpopular among the "fashionable" critics of the 1930s, as if they were "popular" among unfashionable critics, whoever those might be; but then, going fashionable himself, concedes that at least some of the "defects these critics denounced were there in reality"—for example that itinerant anthropologist Miller in *Eyeless in Gaza* is "both boring and improbable, a didactic preacher drawn from the evangelical novels of past age" and that "Anthony's conversion in turn is rendered implausible by his relationship with this chance-found and unlikely guru."

Yes, Miller is, heaven help him, a most paralyzing bore; and Anthony's conversion is to that extent, at the least—far from being transforming or radiant—itself boring. Boring also are Anthony's stagey heroics as he goes off to address the meeting in the teeth of the menacing gang of patriotic thugs ("Dispassionately, and with a serene lucidity, he thought of what was in store for him. Whatever it might be, he knew that all would be well."); and boring is the utter inertness of the language meant to represent his sublime meditations ("Unity beyond the turmoil of separations and divisions. Goodness beyond the possibility of evil. But always the fact of separation persists, always evil remains the very condition of life and being. There must be no relaxation of the opening pressure. But even for the best of us, the consummation is still immeasurably remote. . . ."). Woodcock cites these passages as evidence of the futility of trying to "convey human experience in abstract terms," but more must be said: the novelist who allows himself such vacuities has forgotten what the language of art is and does, or no longer cares, since he is bent on a "higher" mission. Conversion so rendered is either no conversion at all, or it fills one with a passionate desire to remain of the devil's party, where, by God, they know how to speak handsomely of such matters!

In fact Huxley no longer cared. Having come to regard art as an inferior mode of knowing, he became more and more didactic and homeletic. What one accepted, though with misgivings, in *Brave New World*, had become intolerable by *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. Speaking of the latter novel Woodcock doesn't hedge at all: Propter is a "self-righteous preacher" and the interior monologues "read like unkempt essays." As "mystic" Huxley was a "dogmatist," the harshest word in Woodcock's lexicon. But again, lucid and formidable critic though he can be, Woodcock's judgment falters: how otherwise, writing of so bad a novel as *Time Must Have a Stop*, can he with a straight face speak of Huxley's sci-fi looniness about reincarnation as "experimental writing," and go on in all solemnity to elevate those aspects of the book into "one of the rare modern attempts to render into fiction the process that may take place if consciousness does indeed persist after death." (What are the others? And what are the premodern ones?) Nor does he boggle at Huxley's altogether regrettable attempt to render into fiction W. H. Sheldon's whacky theories of physio-psychological types. Striving desperately for belief throughout the Los Angeles phase of his life, going on and on and on about time and eternity, enlightenment and the Divine Ground, Huxley took his gurus where he found them, never pausing to question their credentials or even listen closely to their voices or consider that fiction simply isn't composed from those elements.

For all his imposing intelligence in assembling, comprehensively, as powerful a case as can conceivably be made, Woodcock's revisionist assessment fails to persuade; which leaves us with what should nevertheless remain the single most valuable study of Huxley's career as writer and thinker, and leaves us also with a dimmed but fundamentally unaltered admiration of some of the early novels and shorter fiction as well as a rather thick volume of brilliant general essays and art criticism; and some miscellaneous historical works, especially, perhaps, *The Devils of Loudun* and *Grey Eminence*.

Saul Maloff

distinctive

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A Reminiscence

Edmund Wilson on The New Republic

During the 1920s Edmund Wilson created for himself a special position in the republic or anarchy of American letters: he became the Sainte-Beuve of a new literature. From his editorial desk first at *Vanity Fair*—where he shared it with John Peale Bishop, a gifted friend from Princeton—then after 1926 at *The New Republic*, he scanned the horizon for new talents and wrote perceptive comments on each of them. Sometimes his comments were the first, as in the case of Hemingway. He took a special interest at the time in writers of his own generation, the ones that served briefly in the Great War, and he did a great deal to shape the public images of Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, Wilder, Cummings and the *Fugitive* group.

Writers listened to Wilson as they did not often listen to other critics, and many of them tried to meet his difficult standards. At Princeton (class of '16) Dean Gauss had inspired him with the ambition to create "something in which," as he says in his tribute to Gauss, "every word, every cadence, every detail, should perform a definite function in producing an intense effect." The effect was what he hoped to find in new writers, and he scolded them, if in reasonable terms, when they fell short of producing it. He helped to keep his brilliant contemporaries up to scratch. "For twenty years," Fitzgerald was to write in 1936, "a certain man had been my intellectual conscience. That was Edmund Wilson."

Curiously he hadn't planned to be a critic primarily; he had dreamed of having all literature as his imperium. Perhaps he wanted most to be a dramatist, but he also hoped to distinguish himself as a novelist, a poet, a publicist, a historian and, in general, as a man of letters. That he became a critic was largely by popular demand. His contemporaries realized quite early that he read more books more understandingly and expressed more opinions about them than anyone else of his era. Sometimes in other fields than criticism, as notably fiction and the drama, his knowledge of books turned out to be a handicap, by making him self-conscious.

He had the tireless intellectual energy that is perhaps the better part of genius. Once—it was in 1930—I asked him envyingly how he managed to write so much in so many different areas. Wasn't he ever hung up on the first sentence? "Yes, but it's this way," he said. "I decided finally just to write the first sentence, whatever it was, and go on from there." He went back in his mind to his first and only novel, published the year before. "*I Thought of Daisy* was the hardest to write," he mused, "but I found that whisky helps in a pinch."

I knew him best when we were both on *The New Republic* in the early depression years. He had persuaded the other editors to take me on three weeks before the Wall Street crash; I must have been one of his enthusiasms. In those days he was a rather short, square man of 35 who always wore brown suits to match his eyes and to set off his short-cut sorrel hair. His big head with its firm jaw sat closely on his shoulders. He wasn't handsome, but "*Isn't* Bunny intelligent!" the girls always said of him behind his back, as if intelligence were a secondary sex characteristic like a peacock's tail. Only college friends and ninnies called him Bunny to his face. He had even then an air of authority, as if he were saying by his brisk walk and erect posture that his opinions on any subject carried weight.

"How are things shaping up?" he would say as he walked briskly into the office. That year things were shaping up badly for the country at large. Wilson himself, well in advance of other writers, was undergoing a spiritual and political crisis. He had been staying home to finish *Axel's Castle*, a book on the Symbolist movement and his first large-scale work of literary scholarship, while the magazine was printing it by installments. Now he began reading history and economics instead of Symbolist poetry and fiction. His second wife complained to the girls that he used to wake her in the middle of the night to discuss the political situation. "You see, it's this way," he would tell her as he paced up and down the bedroom and his wife, who had no opinions, tried hard to keep awake.

In the fall of 1930 Wilson announced to his *New Republic* colleagues that he was going to travel over the country and send back a series of reports on the depression. I doubt whether he had been west of Pittsburgh before that time. He had always been sedentary, a reader first of all (and truly the best in America), then a writer bent on making his mark in all fields, and only in the third place, so it seemed to me, a man in the world of living creatures. Inclined to be shy then brusque with strangers; used to getting his information from print rather than people, so that he often paged through a book while asking questions to which one suspected that he wouldn't hear the answers (but write him a letter and he could read one's message between the lines); an innocent in politics because he never bothered to understand how people act in groups, he seemed the last person, at the time, whom a sensible magazine would have chosen as its roving reporter. Yet partly because of that innocence, his reports had a freshness of detail and a vigor of interpretation

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that nobody else could have achieved. They were later published as a book, *The American Jitters* (1932), and they are still the most vivid picture of the country in those years when everything was sliding downhill.

The American Jitters also revealed a change in the author's thinking. Wilson had started on his travels as a progressive who more or less agreed with the notions that Herbert Croly, founder of *The New Republic*, had advanced in *The Promise of American Life*. Croly had put forward a new democratic goal, which he pictured as a return to the strong centralized government advocated by Alexander Hamilton, but administered as Jefferson would have liked it to be, in the interests of the people as a whole. He had thought that such a return might now be accomplished without violence, by an orderly series of reforms. Wilson, as he traveled from city to city, came to feel that capitalism would never reform itself. Nothing short of a new system would save us from "the abyss of starvation and bankruptcy into which the country has fallen, with no sign of any political leadership to pull us out."

Wilson was revolutionary in those days. In "An Appeal to Progressives" (*NR*, January 14, 1931) that has never been reprinted in its original form—don't trust the edulcorated version that appeared 30 years later in *The Shores of Light*—he made his position clear. "It may be that the whole money-making and spending psychology has definitely played itself out," he said, "and that Americans would be willing now for the first time to put their idealism and their genius for organization behind a radical social experiment. . . . I believe that if the American radicals and progressives who repudiate the Marxian dogma and the strategy of the Communist Party hope to accomplish anything valuable, they must take communism away from the Communists, and take it without ambiguities or reservations."

Thousands of young people listened to his adjuration and subsequently found themselves—as Wilson never did—in the Communist Party or on its fringes. In later years I sometimes felt that he had been the old ram who led the flock into the fold and left them there to be sheared, while he jumped over the fence. Oh, I differed with him often and vehemently in the 1930s, especially toward the end of the decade when he was so much quicker than I to dismiss the Moscow trials as an enormous fraud. We fought about Trotsky, too, but I always respected Edmund's positions, the logic by which he reached them, and the absolute integrity with which he held them unless events had proved them to be wrong.

Wilson had resigned from the editorial board I don't remember when, but it may have been shortly after coming back from his travels around the country. For the next nine years he was only a contributor, but the most valued one, paid twice as much as the others and often asking for more. Since he never got along with Bruce Bliven, the managing editor, I had to conduct the negotiations, and they were sometimes difficult. The contributions kept streaming in, though, and they included most of the brilliant literary essays in *The Triple Thinkers* (1938) and *The Wound and the Bow* (1941), besides great portions of *To the Finland Station* (1940), a study of the historians and political theorists who made possible the Russian revolution. Since Wilson had by then lost faith in the revolution, the work exerted less emotional force than it gave proof of monumental scholarship. Still, we printed all of it that he submitted and changed not so much as a comma.

In the fall of 1940 I was taking a three months' leave of absence to do some writing, and I asked Edmund whether

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he wouldn't come back to his old desk in the book department. He accepted the invitation and proved once again that he was a brilliant editor. Besides writing a lively series of articles, "The Boys in the Back Room," he collected a new staff of reviewers, among whom I note for the first time the name of V. Nabokov. In other respects, however, his return was not a success. Leonard Elmhirst, whose wife Dorothy then subsidized the paper, had made a wartime visit from England to discuss complaints that others had made about editorial policy. During his visit, Edmund's feeling of resentment against Bruce Bliven exploded into an open quarrel, from which Bruce emerged in sole charge of the paper. Edmund resigned as of December 1, 1940, and never again wrote for *The New Republic* (though he had left a few of his articles in the barrel).

Beginning with the issue of January 1, 1944, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker*, and the association continued till his death. *The New Yorker* gave him as much freedom as *The New Republic* did, though it could hardly give him more, and it gave him more space—sometimes too much, one felt, after deciding that concision was not Edmund's principal virtue. As time went on, less and less of his work was devoted to contemporary books and authors. One opened the magazine to see what in God's name he would be doing next. First he sent back some rather crotchety reports from postwar Europe; then, after studying Hebrew, he wrote about the conclusions to be drawn from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Having traveled from reservation to reservation, he described the troubles of the Iroquois, and then, after a great bout of reading, he presented recent Canadian literature. All this time he was studying the writing and correspondence that centered on the Civil War—this for his last monumental work of scholarship, *Patriotic Gore* (1962)—and he was fighting some epic battles mostly reported in other magazines: with the Internal Revenue Service, with Nabokov (over Russian prosody), and with the Modern Language Association (over their new editions of the American classics).

He was no longer the Sainte-Beuve of a new literature, but something at once bigger and less definite; perhaps one might speak of him as a mixture of Samuel Johnson, William Hazlitt, and Burton the traveler. Sometimes his heart wasn't in his new work, as when he said after *Patriotic Gore* that he was glad to be finished with those Civil

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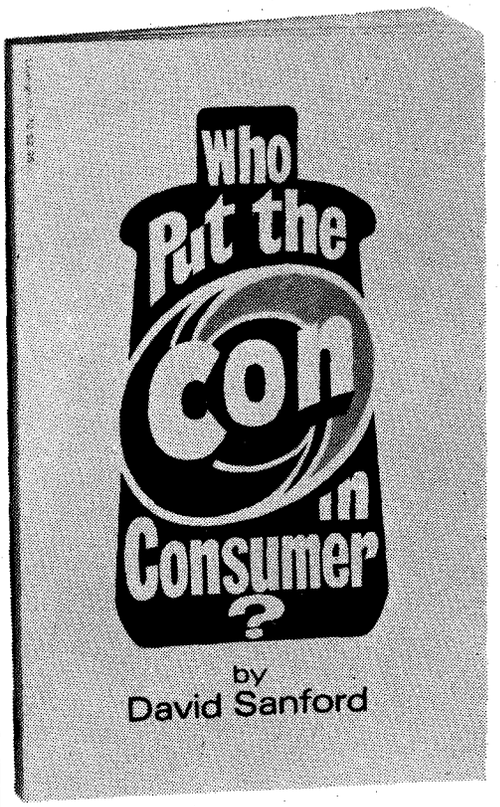

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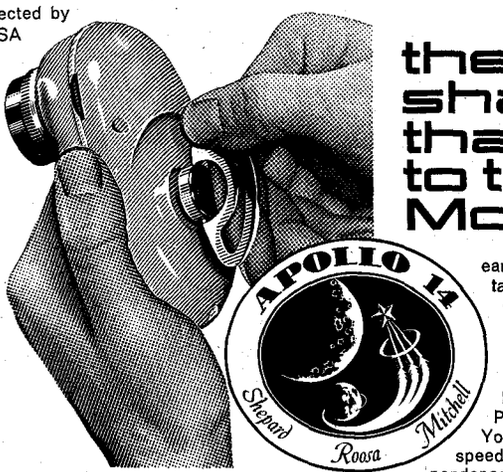

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War worthies; they weren't people he could write his best about. There is a difference in quality between *Classics and Commercials* (1950), a collection of his pieces for *The New Yorker*, and *The Shores of Light* (1952), mostly consisting of his earlier work for *The New Republic*. The earlier essays and reviews are sometimes less mature in judgment, as is to be expected, but they are warmer and compelling.

"I find that I am a man of the twenties," Wilson says in the last of his books published during his lifetime, *Upstate* (1971), which also has the most direct appeal. "I am still expecting something exciting: drinks, animated conversation, gaiety, brilliant writing, uninhibited exchange of ideas." The men of the '20s had such good times that later some of them—as Hemingway, for example—fell into a frozen attitude of regret for the past. Wilson was one of the few who continued to grow, chiefly by extending his scholarly interests—during his last years he was studying Hungarian literature in the original—but still he lost something by partly severing his ties with his generation: those were a sort of placental cord that nourished him with convictions and enthusiasms. He judged his contemporaries and liked most of them. "What will Edmund think about this?" they sometimes asked themselves when making a moral decision. At his most influential he had served as a literary conscience not only for Fitzgerald but for the generation as a whole.

Malcolm Cowley

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

freakishly. His editing is sharp, tart. He has a way, somewhat reminiscent of Antonioni, of deepening certain scenes simply by pressing on. One day Rosemonde comes home from her routine job at the factory feeling empty and dehumanized. She puts on a rock record and begins to swing her head to it as if recharging batteries. Her roommate comes in, stops the record angrily, and leaves. The scene should end or change, no? But Tanner keeps the camera on Rosemonde as she continues to swing her head, smiling, in the silence, and her pleasure shifts to the edge of hysteria.

Bulle Ogier, who plays Rosemonde, looks like a mousy cross between Monica Vitti and Julie Harris, with sulks and insects crawling around inside her and the ability to become very sexy when she chooses. Jean-Luc Bideau is attractively clumsy as the journalist. Jacques Denis is high-spirited and sensitive as the poetic housepainter.

Tanner's first feature, *Charles, Dead or Alive*, is again unfortunately labeled: "A Small Historical Fresco." Why "fresco"? Why anything? He wrote this script alone, possibly without a thought of Tolstoy's play *The Living Corpse*, but it's like an up-to-date Geneva version of that work. A successful middle-aged businessman, married, with two grown children, is discontented with his life and, instead of going to live with the gypsies like Tolstoy's hero, he goes to live with a couple of dropouts. The only one he informs of his whereabouts is his daughter, a student-rebel. His money-grubbing son hires a detective to find him, and in the end Charles is carted away out of his new happiness to an asylum, because he didn't want his old plump life.

This film is just as well-made as *La Salamandre*—both were acutely photographed by Renato Berta in brusque but understanding black-and-white—but *Charles* relies somewhat glibly on the audience's acceptance of certain assumptions, on pat symbols of alienation and the virtues of youthful revolution. A lesser facet of Godard mars the script, a barrage of quotations like the Paris graffiti of May '68. ("Be realistic. Ask the impossible.") These quotations, unlike those from the Little Red Book, stoke the spirit of revolution without providing a politics.

No question, however, that Tanner is a discovery. (Thanks, yet once more, to New Yorker Films, who imported him, and *Tokyo Story*, and many, many others.) Certainly he is a scion of the French cinema of the '60s, but he has taken what suits him and has made it his own. He knows what has happened in film and in himself; he not only has the means to express himself, he has private experience to explore. Character fascinates him, and he has the cinematic skill to investigate it. Also, he has humor, compassion, and, to judge by two films, a growing ability for ingratiating understatement. He is not so far an innovator of any kind; he is a creative absorber—a gifted, humane, observant filmmaker with a fine chance for a fine career.

Like Antonioni, Tanner did not make his first fiction feature until he was almost forty. I draw no conclusion from the parallel; I simply note it.

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Are We Waiting For The Lights to Go Out...

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JUN 27 1972

before we start solving the nation's power crisis?

Sometime this summer, somewhere, chances are there'll be serious power failures. Wheels will slow down or stop . . . lights will dim or go out . . . all the things we rely on electricity to run will fall silent and useless.

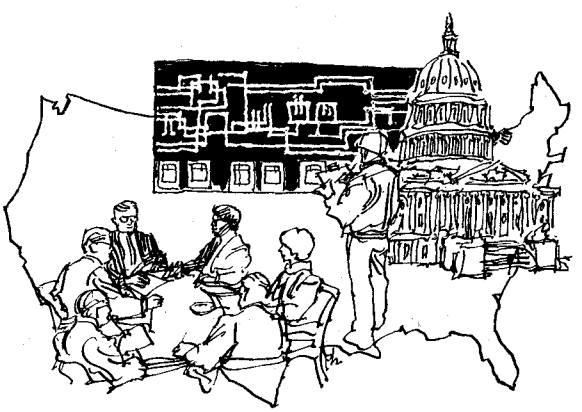
Does it take a disaster to get us moving?

For some time we of America's rural electric systems—a small but vital part of the power industry—have been pointing out the need for a national fuels and energy policy. Now, as our country's energy crisis nears the danger point, we urge, as part of a national effort to solve it, *priority action for:*

—nationwide interconnections of high-voltage power lines to form a grid that can shuttle electricity swiftly from one area of the country to another . . . from where it's needed least to where it's needed most.

—a massive research and development program to find new sources of energy, to improve present systems, and to achieve more efficient use of fuels.

—protection of environmental, ecological, and consumer interests.



It becomes clearer each day that we must go beyond our present piecemeal approach to finding solutions for America's complex energy problem . . . that we must proceed, in unity, under a comprehensive, farsighted plan . . . or we face the grave risk of *neither* meeting our energy needs *nor* protecting our environment.

Bringing to reality a national fuels and energy policy which makes human well-being the benchmark of progress demands the active involvement of every concerned citizen. Adequate, dependable power in a clean world is too important to the future of all to be left up to a few.

America's consumer-owned rural electric systems were created by people united by their common need for light and power in the nation's countryside. Working together, and backed up by a national commitment, people solved that power crisis. People, working together and with their elected leaders, can solve this one, too.

But we must start *now* to take those first steps to ensure reliable electric light and power within a clean and healthful environment.

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